



Budget Brief: Veterans' Affairs

TRANSPORTATION, ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY, & NATIONAL GUARD

FY 2010

SUMMARY

During the 2007 General Session the Legislature enacted House Bill 426, "Change to Department of Veterans' Affairs". This legislation created the Department of Veterans' Affairs and removed responsibility of the Utah National Guard to oversee the budgets and administration of Veterans' Affairs, Veterans' Cemetery, and Veterans' Nursing Home.

The Utah Department of Veterans Affairs is the agency responsible for Utah's 160,000 veterans. The primary mission of the agency is to assist former and present members of the United States Armed Forces, both active and reserve, and their families in preparing claims for and securing compensation, health services, education and other federal and state veterans' benefits for service connected conditions.

ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The base budget for the Veterans' Affairs line item for FY 2010 is \$963,800. This recommendation includes funding for three programs within the line item, including Veterans' Affairs Administration, Veterans' Cemetery, and Veterans' Nursing Home.

ADMINISTRATION

The Utah Department of Veterans Affairs is the agency responsible for Utah's 160,000 veterans. The primary mission of the agency is to assist former and present members of the United States Armed Forces, both active and reserve, and their families in preparing claims for and securing compensation, health services, education and other federal and state veterans' benefits for service connected conditions.

These services are performed via outreach efforts around the state, information and benefit fairs, workshops and briefings. The Department also conducts veterans benefit briefings for returning National Guardsmen and Reservists. The Department is also the repository of military discharge documents verifying military service required to receive veteran's benefits. The Division responds to complaints from individual veterans, veterans' groups, the governor's office, and state and federal congressional offices. A base budget of \$511,800 for FY 2010 for the Veterans' Administration is recommended.

VETERANS' CEMETERY

The Veterans' Cemetery was established to allow veterans and their spouses a local burial option in a military cemetery. A base budget of \$317,000 for FY 2010 for the Veterans' Cemetery is included in the Base Budget Recommendation.

VETERANS' NURSING HOME

The Utah State Veterans' Nursing Home is an 81-bed, long-term care facility that provides both skilled and intermediate levels of care to Utah's veterans and eligible spouses who are residents of Utah. The General Fund portion of the Veterans' Nursing Home for FY 2010 is \$135,000.

Adoption of Fees

The listing of fees is provided as a separate Issue Brief during the General Session of the Legislature.